

The inventors completed the invention disclosed in the above-captioned patent application and claimed in claims 1-16 before October 14, 1999, as evidenced by the following facts.

Before October 14, 1999, the inventors conceived of the invention set forth in claims 1-16. The drawings, as filed with this application on November 29, 1999 (except for the reference numbers and lead lines), were also prepared before October 14, 1999. Mark A. Mars reviewed the application, including the drawings, as filed, and signed the declaration for this application before the October 14, 1999, filing date of Frazier et al. As evidence of this, attached hereto are copies of: (1) the drawings as originally filed with this application; and (2) the declaration for this application, which Mark Mars signed on September 15, 1999.

For the foregoing reasons, Frazier is not prior art with respect claim 1-16. Applicants therefore respectfully request reconsideration of this application and issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

*Communication*

If the Applicants may expedite consideration of the instant application in any way, the examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully Submitted,

BANNER & WITCOFF, LTD.

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